

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 MC-02 ACDA-05 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00

AGR-05 /088 W

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R 211029Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3114

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 22256

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, PINT, MMOL, CB, LA, TH, UR

SUBJECT: THAI RELATIONS WITH AND CONCERNS ABOUT LAOS

REF: FBIS BK 210230Y OCT 1975

1. FOREIGN MINISTER CHATCHAI CHOOHAWAN MET OCTOBER 20 WITH LAO AMBASSADOR OUAN SNITH AND REPORTEDLY PROPOSED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT PATROLS ON THE MEKONG TO END MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND PREVENT SMUGGLING, PARTICULARLY LARGE-SCALE ARMS SMUGGLING INTO THAILAND AND SUGAR AND RICE CONTRABAND GOING INTO LAOS. CHATCHAI LATER TOLD PRESS HE INTENDS TO DEVOTE HIS TIME DURING COMING WEEKS TO IMPROVE TIES WITH THAILAND'S NEIGHBORS. THE PRESS NOTED THAT CHATCHAI STATED HE WAS UNCERTAIN WHETHER CAMBODIAN DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER IENG SARY WILL BE VISITING BANGKOK IN OCTOBER, AS PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED.

2. IN AN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN THE NATION OCTOBER 21 (REF) NEWLY ARRIVED LAO EMBASSY COUNSELLOR KATH DITTHAVONG DENIED THAT THE USSR HAS PROVIDED LAOS WITH ANY NEW
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WEAPONS SINCE THE WAR ENDED. IN ADDITION, HE CONFIRMED

THAT THE SOVIETS ARE BUILDING A NEW TOWN AT KHANG KHAI
IN XIENG KHOUANG PROVINCE, BASED ON A CONTRACT CONCLUDED
BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES SEVERAL MONTHS AGO.

3. ON A SEPARATE SUBJECT, KATH DITTHAVONG SAID THE
MONARCHY WILL NOT BE ELIMINATED IN LAOS AFTER THE NEW,
ELECTED NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SITS ON MAY 11. "THOUGH
OUT KING HAS NO POWER WE WILL CONTINUE TO REGARD HIM
AS THE LEADER OF THE COUNTRY BECAUSE THIS IS A LONG-
STANDING TRADITION IN LAOS".

4. COMMENT: THAILAND REMAINS UNEASY OVER RELATIONS
WITH ITS NORTHERN NEIGHBOR AND THAT COUNTRY'S INTENTIONS
(AND THOSE OF ITS ALLIES). IT WANTS TO MINIMIZE PROBLEMS
TO PREVENT AN EXCUSE FOR A MORE SERIOUS CONFLICT. HOW
SUCCESSFUL CHATCHAI WILL BE AT THIS POINT SEEMS TO US
TO BE DOUBTFUL. WHITEHOUSE

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